Mr. JENNER. You were then 21 years of age?

Mr. THORNLEY. About; yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Tell me about what your occupation and activity had been up to the time you enlisted in the Marines.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, the year before I was a student at the University of Southern California, and before that I was a student at California High School in Whittier, Calif.

Mr. JENNER. I take it then that you are a native Californian?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Did you receive your degree?

Mr. THORNLEY. No. I was—I completed my freshman year and then I went on active duty to serve my 2-year obligation in the Marine Reserve.

Mr. JENNER. You did not return to college after you were mustered out of the Marines?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Was your discharge honorable?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Where were you based when you first met Lee Harvey Oswald?

Mr. THORNLEY. At a subsidiary of El Toro Marine Base, referred to as LTA, Santa Ana, Calif., or just outside of Santa Ana.

Mr. JENNER. What was your rank at that time?

Mr. THORNLEY. At that time I was acting corporal.

Mr. JENNER. What was your assignment then?

Mr. THORNLEY. I was an aviation electronics operator. I was working in an aircraft control center reading radarscopes and keeping track of ingoing and outgoing flights.

Mr. JENNER. What was Lee Harvey Oswald's assignment and activity service-wise at that period?

Mr. THORNLEY. At that time his assignments and activities were primary janitorial. He was—he had lost his clearance previously, and if I remember, he was assigned to make the coffee, mow the lawn, swab down decks, and things of this nature.

Mr. JENNER. What were the circumstances as you learned of them, or knew of them at the time, as to how or why he lost his clearance as you put it.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, I asked somebody, and I was told, and I don't remember who told me, it was a general rumor, general scuttlebutt at the time, that he had poured beer over a staff NCO's head in an enlisted club in Japan, and had been put in the brig for that, and having been put in the brig would automatically lose his clearance to work in the electronics control center.

Mr. JENNER. I was going to ask you what losing clearance meant. You have indicated that—or would you state it more specifically.

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, that meant in a practical sense, that meant that he was not permitted to enter certain areas wherein the equipment, in this case equipment, was kept; that we would not want other unauthorized persons to have knowledge of. And on occasion information, I imagine, would also come to the man who was cleared, in the process of his work, that he would be expected to keep to himself.

Mr. JENNER. I assume you had clearance?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir; I was, I think, cleared for confidential at the time.

Mr. JENNER. Cleared for confidential. I was about to ask you what level of clearance was involved.

Mr. THORNLEY. I believe it was just confidential to work there at El Toro on that particular equipment.

Mr. JENNER. That is the clearance about which you speak when you talk about Oswald having lost it?

Mr. THORNLEY. Oswald, I believe, had a higher clearance. This is also just based upon rumor. I believe he at one time worked in the security files, it is the S & C files, somewhere either at LTA or at El Toro.

Mr. JENNER. Did you ever work in the security files?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. And that was a level of clearance——

Mr. THORNLEY. Probably a secret clearance would be required.

Mr. JENNER. It was at least higher than the clearance about which you first spoke?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. The clearance that you had in mind of which you first spoke was the clearance to operate radar detection devices?

Mr. THORNLEY. Right.

Mr. JENNER. And your knowledge of his loss of clearance was by hearsay or rumor. As I understand it the circumstances took place off base one day?

Mr. THORNLEY. No; this was on base as I understand it. It was in an enlisted club or staff sergeant's club, something of that nature.

Mr. JENNER. He had gotten into difficulty with a staff sergeant and had poured beer on the person of a staff sergeant and gotten into some kind of an altercation?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. As a result of that he was court-martialed and had been subjected to the loss of clearance?

Mr. THORNLEY. That is correct.

Mr. JENNER. Was that clearance of his restored?

Mr. THORNLEY. I doubt it very much, because 3 months afterwards, after I had left the outfit—I know it wasn't restored while I was in the outfit.

Mr. JENNER. When did you leave the outfit?

Mr. THORNLEY. I left in June and went overseas.

Mr. JENNER. Up to that time his clearance had not been restored?

Mr. THORNLEY. Definitely not. And shortly thereafter he got out of the service.

Mr. JENNER. So that as far as you have any personal knowledge Oswald never operated any radar equipment while he was at El Toro, did you say?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes; El Toro, LTA. As far as my personal knowledge goes, he didn't.

Mr. JENNER. Would you state the circumstances under which you became acquainted—let me put it this way first. What was the extent of your acquaintance with Lee Harvey Oswald, and here at the moment I am directing myself only to whether you were friends, were you merely on the base together? Indicate the level of friendship first or acquaintanceship.

Mr. THORNLEY. I would say we were close acquaintances in the sense that we weren't friends in that we didn't pull liberty together or seek each other out, yet when we were thrown together in an assignment or something, moving equipment, something of that nature, we spoke and when we were on the base and happened to be in the same area and were not required to be working, we would sometimes sit down and discuss things. That would be my statement there.

Mr. JENNER. So there was a degree of affinity in the sense that you were friendly in performing your military tasks together whenever you were thrown together, in that respect. You felt friendly toward each other. You were never off base with him on liberty?

Mr. THORNLEY. No, sir.

Mr. JENNER. There were times when you were at liberty on the base, I assume, and you and he fraternized?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes.

Mr. JENNER. Now, did you live in the same quarters?

Mr. THORNLEY. Well, not actually. We lived in quonset huts there, and he lived in a different hut than I did. We did live in the same general area, however.

Mr. JENNER. This acquaintance arose in the spring of 1959, is that correct?

Mr. THORNLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JENNER. Can you fix the time a little more definitely than merely the spring?

Mr. THORNLEY. I really can't, sir. I have been racking my brain on that one since November, and I can't fix the time. I do remember having taken some time off that year around Easter and going on a trip with some civilian friends of mine, who were out of school for Easter vacation, and I know I was in the outfit that Oswald was in at that time, and I know that either shortly